Understanding and Responding to Loneliness in Later Life: The Role of Emerging Technologies

19 October 2023
12PM - 1PM (SGT)
(ZOOM)

Session chaired by:
A/P Bussarawan Teerawichitchainan
(CFPR Co-Director & Department of Sociology and Anthropology)

Register here:

https://nus-sg.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_bi2nGJIkRuuwvNd8m9VtLQ#/registration

In 2018, the UK made history by appointing the world's first Minister for Loneliness, followed by Japan in 2021. Loneliness has detrimental effects on the social, emotional, and physical well-being of older people (aged 65+), increasing the risk of illnesses like dementia, stroke, and depression. Frail older people living in care homes and alone in the community are particularly vulnerable to loneliness. As digital technologies have the potential to create opportunities for social connection, they have been heralded as solutions to the problem. To explore the role of technology in addressing loneliness in later life, I conducted research combining sociology and computer science to co-develop and co-test technology-based interventions for these most vulnerable groups. In this talk, I consolidate my findings from studies on various technologies – a communication app, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence – to provide a critical perspective on better understanding and responding to loneliness in later life.

THE SPEAKER

Dr Barbara B. Neves

Barbara Barbosa Neves (PhD, FRSA) is an award-winning sociologist of technology and ageing, specializing in loneliness and digital inequalities. Her research influences technology design and policy worldwide. With 25 prizes and +$5M in funding, she has published in top-tier Social and Computer Science outlets and is often featured in global media.